

SATGURU RAM SINGH ENERGETIC SUCCESSOR

*Memoranda regarding GOOROO RAM SINGH,
gathered from confidential communications from
various officers in the Punjab.*

SATGURU RAM SINGH THE SUCCESSOR

About 16 years ago, a Sikh named Balak Singh, caste, Arora, started a new sect of Sikhs at Hazru, in the Rawalpindi district. They were named Jagasis (or Habias), and made large numbers of converts in the neighbourhood.

Amongst his more favourite disciples were three.

- (1) Kahn Singh, who now is the head of the sect at Hazru;
- (2) Lal Singh, now resident at Amritsar.
- (3) Ram Singh, for some years past resident of village Bhaini,

In Ludhiana, and the subject of these notes. On the death of their founder, which occurred some six months ago, the members appear to have unanimously elected Gooroo Ram Singh as his successor. Though the sect seems to have failed in the neighbourhood of Hazru since Balak Singh's death, it has thriven in the most remarkable manner in the district adjoining the home his more energetic successor.

*-12th June 1863, Mr. Green, Astt.,
District Superintendent of Police. Attock.*

DOMINATING PERSONALITY

In due course the party arrived at Amritsar, (11th April, 1863) and it was found that their leader was Ram Singh. He is a spare man, 5 feet 10 inches; fairish complexion, pitted with small-pox; hazel eyes; long nose and face; grizzled beard and moustache; by cast a carpenter Sikh; reads and writes Gurmukhi, and has worked on occasion as a mason. *-6th June 1863, Lieut. Hamilton,
District Superintendent of Police. Ferozpoore*

His followers at Amritsar were all sturdy young men, each with a stout stick. He expressed his intention of going to his home on the breaking up of the fair, and as no seditious language had been used, and he seemed peaceably disposed, it was considered unadvisable to interfere with him at the height of the fair. The Deputy Inspector-General of Police and Deputy Commissioner, with the Superintendent of Police, visited him; and he seemed quite agreeable to their suggestion of dismissing the greater portion of his followers, he was allowed to go his way.

*-11th April, Major Mercer, Deputy
Commissioner, Amritsar.*

GURU RAM SINGH UNDER STRICT POLICE SURVEILLANCE

On 4th June the Chaukidar of village "Khota", in Firozpur, reported at Police Station, "Bagha Purana", that for two or three days (Guru) Ram Singh, with 4 or 500 followers, had assembled at his village, performed mass marriages of six couples and were behaving in a very extra-ordinary manner. They talked sedition, said the country would soon be theirs and they would speedily have 1,25,000 armed men to back them; that they would only take a fifth of the land's produce from the cultivators; and were altogether comporting themselves in a very extra-ordinary manner.

A police Sergeant at once repaired to the spot, and found the chaukidar's statement to be quite correct. A number of women were also with them, and took part in all their proceedings. Soon after his arrival the meeting gradually broke up. Subsequently, on the 6th June, the Assistant Superintendent of Police, when making inquiries in "Khota" about Ram Singh, learnt, from the Lombardars of that and neighbouring villages, that he had been talking seditiously.

The officiating Deputy Commissioner, Ferozpur, directed that no more assemblies were to take place, and that Ram Singh himself and his "Chelas" were to be sent, station by station, to his home at Bhaini, in Ludhiana. This order has been carried out, and he is now under strict police surveillance at his home.

*-7th June 1863. Lieutenant Hamilton,
District Superintendent of Police Firozpur.*

On submitting the above information from Lieutenant Hamilton, His Honour directed the Secretary to Government to write to Mr. Thomas, Deputy Commissioner, Ferozpur, to proceed at once to Khota, take the depositions of the Lombardars, forwarding copies direct to Secretary to Government and if necessary cause the arrest at once of Ram Singh. The preaching of Ram Singh is just now creating a good deal of sensation in the Punjab, but opinions appear to be conflicting about him.

*-9th June, Major McAndrew, Deputy
Inspector-General Police, Lahore.*

HE OBEYED NO HAKIM

The first intelligence the Police department received regarding them, of an unusual nature was from the Deputy Commissioner of Sialkot. It was rumoured in the district that an elderly Sikh of Ludhiana, calling himself "Bhai", was going about the country with 200 men, whom he drilled at Night with sticks instead of muskets : that he boasted of 5000 followers, and obeyed no Hakim. They purposed going with a lot of women, who were also of their party, to the Baisakhi fair at Amritsar.

*-5th April 1863, Mr. Macnabb, Deputy
Commissioner, Sialkot.*

DOCTRINE OF SATGURU RAM SINGH

The leading features of the doctrine he teaches are as follows:

"Abolishes all distinctions of caste among Sikhs; advocates indiscriminate intermarriage of all classes; enjoins the marriage of widows, all of which he performs himself; he never takes alms himself, and prohibits his followers from doing so; enjoins abstinence from liquor and drugs, he exhorts his disciples to be cleanly and truth telling. One of his maxims says, "It is well that every one carry his staff, and they all do."

"The Granth is their only accepted inspired volume. The brotherhood may be known by the tie of their pagris, "Sidha Pag" by watchword, and by a necklace of knots made in a white woolen cord to represent beads, and which are worn by all the Community".

*-June 1863 D.C./D.S.P. Amritsar
Jalandhar, Lahore, Sialkote*

RISING OF KUKA MOVEMENT

From T.H. Thornton, Esq., Secretary to Government, Punjab, to the Secretary to the Government of India, Foreign Department, the 18th September 1866.

I Have the honour, by direction of the Hon'ble the Lieutenant-Governor, to transmit, for the information of the Right Hon'ble the Governor General in Council, copies of the correspondence noted in the margin having reference to the proceedings of the sect known as the "Kukas," or followers of Ram Singh of Bhainee.

I am to suggest that, if advisable, measures be taken for confidentially enjoining Officers Commanding Native Troops to ascertain, so far as is possible, what is thought of the sect by their men; and that it might, perhaps, be expedient, in the course of the relief, and so far as may be otherwise consistent with the interests of the public service, to select for location in the Sirhind and Lahore Divisions, but especially in the former, those regiments which contain the smallest number of Punjabees other than Mahomedans.

I am further to solicit sanction to the establishment for the present of a repeating Telegraph Station at Loodiana.

Copy of a letter from Colonel R.G. Taylor, C.B. Commissioner and Superintendent, Umballa, to the Secretary to Government, Punjab, dated the 11th September 1866.

You will remember that in June last I reported demi-officially, for His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor's information, that Ram Singh of Bhainee had with his followers been conducting himself in such a manner that I had thought it advisable to reimpose the restriction on his liberty which had been partially relaxed in accordance with the tenor of your letter, No. 356, of the 19th March 1866. In your demi-official reply of the 16th of June you conveyed His Honor's sanction to the arrangement I had made. I have now to report that I have ever since closely watched the proceedings of the sect, and have gathered opinions from all quarters about them.

I am therefore of opinion that the following measures should be adopted at once—

1st.—That Ram Singh be arrested and removed far away from the scene of his present machinations. This might be done via Lahore and Mooltan to Bombay, or by Delhi to Calcutta, but the former would be preferable. In the same way I would go for the present arrest and remove his Lieutenants.

2nd.—I would forbid Kukalism in the ranks of the Police and Army. It would remain for consideration whether men who have already become Kukas in those bodies should be got rid of, but at any rate I would have no more of it in the ranks. It is a secret combination, as the watch word cannot be divulged, and as such wholly inappropriate among the servants of the State.

On initiation the proselyte has to bind himself to observe a list of virtues, which are very taking to the eye. A Muntra, or watchword, is then whispered in his ear, and he becomes a Kuka, one bound to assemble at the alarm cry, or Kook, such is the explanation given of the term by RujubAli and most probably the correct one.

Having a decidedly bad opinion of Ram Singh and his whole sect, I conceive the watchword may in all probability run—"All's fair against the Frank," administering a gentle corrective to inconvenient rigour of the preliminary tenets adopted on oath by the novice. This is only conjecture of course. Any word such as "akal," a favourite cry of the Kukas, would convey the same meaning to a Sikh. It is my thorough belief that these lads mean war sooner or later, and I strongly recommend my Government to be before hand with them.

I think it quite possible that the arrest of Ram Singh may lead to disturbance, but that will be easily dealt with now: after another four or five months, and when another hot weather is commencing, it may not be so easy to quell the more matured effort.

EIGHTYTHOUSAND NECKLACES GIVEN AWAY

Captain Thulloch reports, on the 27th Oct, 1866 that the sect in his district (Sealkote) do not muster more than 200, but adds that 80,000 necklaces have been given away by Ram Singh to a like number of admitted disciples. In 1863 the Native Inspector thought the Sect numbered 300, whilst Lieutenant Mc Neille considered 3000, so nearer the mark.

Captain Wall writing on the 22nd September 1866, says the Kookas in Gujranwala may number 2,000.

-19 June 1867

Vernacular Newspapers wrote

-years 1866-1868

Ushraf-ul-Akhbar-Delli

(Urdu Weekly Paper)

19th Dec. 1866 Page 20

In the district of Loodhiana in the Punjab one Ram Singh - A Sikh, has, it is said, taken upon himself, the honor of being a prophet, and has converted sixty thousand (60,000) persons to his creed. Those who are with him go from place to place or make converts. The Police are wandering about in great thought of them, etc.etc.

The Nujum-ool-Akhbar, Meerut (Urdu)

2nd of January, 1867 Page 47.

A story is reported of some carpenter of Loodhiana who has got up a sect of his own, to which he has thirty thousand converts. It is added, that the Sikh sepoy in the fort, too have gone over to him, and the Government has thought it necessary to send Goorkhas in the fort.

Raih-noo-mai-Punjab-Sealkot

18 Feb., 1867 Page 92.

It is a matter of wonder and regret that the Punjabis are again thinking of old Saltanat and crying out against the rules of Government.

KUKA DAK SYSTEM

One important information revealed to the authorities the nature of the postal system of the Kukas. The Government of the Panjab reported to the Government of India in their letter No. 157-54 dated 2nd February, 1867, the following details of the Kuka Postal System :

"The Kookas have a private post of their own which appears to be admirably organised. Confidential letters are circulated much in the same way as the fiery cross was carried through by a highland clan in Scottish by gone days. A Kooka, on the arrival at his village of another of the same sect with a despatch, at once leaves off whatever work he may be engaged upon : if in the midst of a repast, not another morsel is eaten; he asks no question, but taking the message starts off at a run and conveys it to the next relief, or to his destination.

GURU RAM SINGH INCARNATION OF GOD

Whilst Ram Singh was in quasi-confinement at Bhainee, there was a charm of mystery and esoterics about the man, to which our espionage, perhaps, added a spice of fascinating prosecution. All this was calculated to attract the susceptible. His Soubahs preached up their Gooroo as no mere man, but a very incarnation of the deity, co-equal with Gooroo Gobind Singh and Gooroo Nunuck, of sainted, memory of every Sikh.

They described him in the following lines which may be roughly translated - "The God, whose praise is in the old poets, this God has appeared in the likeness of Ram Singh".

*Lt. Col. G. Hutchinson, I.G. Police
Punjab. 19 Jan. 1869*

KUKA REGIMENT IN KASHMIR

I have the honor to report, for the information of Government, the principal features of interest in the proceedings of the Kooka sect during the year 1870.

My last note upon this association closed with the mention of the enlistment of a Kooka regiment for Cashmeer. I am now able to give fuller details regarding this battalion.

A deputy Inspector was sent in the end of 1869 to Jamu to learn particulars concerning the composition and interior economy of this corps. He returned in February 1870, and gave in substance the following report—

Some six or seven months ago Hira Singh (Umbala District), Tara Singh (of Killa Desa Singh Umritsur District), Lal Singh (of Puttiala), Chanda Singh (of Amritsar), and about thirty other Kookas went to the Maharaja of Cashmeer and asked for service. The Maharaja promised to form them into a regiment, if they could collect enough men to constitute one; a residence was assigned, them in the lines outside they city of Jamu. Recruiting was commenced ; and, at the time of the Deputy Inspector's visit, one hundred and fifty men had been secured. They were, however, not all present ; some had left, it is supposed, for their homes. Our informant counted seventy-one Kookas actually present, and noticed that some of them were old men, and a few quite boys.

Hira Singh was stated to be the commandant, and it was said he was absent

recruiting.

The monthly pay of the rank and file was equivalent to ten Chilki Rupees, or one rupee in excess of the salary received by the ordinary troops of His Highness the Maharaja : part of the pay was given in flour.

The men had been drilled, but were not regularly armed. When they went on parade arms were served out to them ; these they gave into store when the manoeuvres were over. No uniform had been issued to them.

The Kookas were discontented, and deserted in considerable numbers. On the whole, the Maharaja did not appear pleased with the experiment.

Several other persons were despatched to Cashmeer to glean tidings of the state of this regiment. It was ascertained that the head-quarters had been removed to Srinagar.

In October we heard that a batch of twenty recruits were on their way, and some what later that the battalion numbered from 200 to 250 strong. The men were armed and drilled. One Ram Singh, said to have been on leave, was mentioned as the Commandant.

From the reports received from time to time during the past year, it would appear that the popularity of the sect is on the decline. It is true that disciples are still added to the faith, but their number is probably more than counterbalanced by secessions.

In order to revive his influence, (Guru) Ram Singh has determined to send a legate to the Ruler of Nipal. The district Superintendent of Lahore mentions that

Bhagwan Singh very recently arrived here from Bhaini Ram Singh's residence, entrusted by Ram Singh with Rupees 1,100 to purchase a pair of mules and a couple of buffaloes to be given as "thayf" (a Guru's offering) to the Maharaja.

The Story amongst the Kookas is, that the Maharaja wrote to Ram Singh and asked him to sent some men for the Nipal regiments. To his Ram Singh is stated to have replied—"I will not yet despatch any Kookas, nor will I come myself, but I send this present."

Lieutenant-Colonel Baillie, Deputy Inspector-General of Lahore Circle, reports that one of the warmest promotors of the Kooka faith is Dewan Buta Singh, the proprietor of the Aftab-Punjab Press, in the Lahore city. The Mahunts and Subahs of the sect are constantly with him, and he is consulted in all matters of importance. From this man's antecedents his adherence to the tenets of this creed from religious motives may well be doubted. Dewan Buta Singh was detected, during the early days of British rule in the Punjab, interiguining with the Ex-Ranee Chand Kour, and passed seven years in the Agra Fort as a punishment for his misconduct. He does not bear the character of a well wisher to the English Government.

The novel phase of Kookaism, during the past year, is the enlistment of its disciples in the forces of Native Princes in alliance with Her Majesty, that is, enlistment in Cashmeer, and rumoured advances towards this end from the Maharaja of Nipal.

—I.G. Police Punjab to Secy. to the Govt. of Punjab 30 Jan. 1871

DISMISSAL OF KUKAS SERVING IN POLICE

I am desired by His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor, with reference to your letter No. 172 of 7th instant, requesting his opinion on the propriety of applying to the Constabulary Forces the principles laid down by the Military Department for dealing with members of the Kuka sect, serving in the army; or desirous of being enlisted for such service, to reply as follows.

His Honor concurs with His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief in thinking that all Kukas should be dismissed from the ranks of Native Army, and further enlistment stopped, and that the same rule should be applied to the Constabulary.

It has been shown, in His Honor's opinion, that, however well behaved individuals amongst the sect may be, they are subject to an organization requiring their unhesitating obedience to the secret mandates of its leaders. There is now no doubt that the object of the sect is the overthrow of the British Government and the re-establishment of the Khalsa Raj.

His Honor, therefore considers it advisable to show publicly that we are aware of these designs, and will not retain in the armed service of Government men bound to abet them. So long as it was possible to hold the belief that the Kuka association was a religious one, perfect tolerance was extended to it by the Local Administration. With the exposure of its false character there should, in His Honor's opinion, follow a change in our mode of dealing with these secretaries; and it is simply a measure of prudence to eject them from positions, which enable them to propagate sedition in the ranks of those on whom we depend for its suppression.

Hitherto to procedure in the Punjab Constabulary as regards these men has been to refuse to enlist them, and to transfer such as are in the force to districts where the sect has but little sympathy. Their numbers are not large, probably in all the districts together not more than thirty known to be Kukas; but as regards them; His Honor desires now, with the sanction of the Supreme Government to order their dismissal on such terms, as regards either gratuity or pension, as may in each case seem fitting.

—Under Secy. Punjab to Secy. Govt. of India,
15th March 1872

**UNDER SECRET SURVEILLANCE
CENTRAL POLICE OFFICE, LAHORE**

Dated : Lahore : 28th July, 1871

To,

**Colonel, J.C.P. Bailie,
Deputy Inspector General of Police
Lahore Circle.**

Ram Singh and his Subas to be put under secret surveillance.

The Lieutenant Governor desires you to arrange that Ram Singh Kuka, and his vizirs (Subas) be kept under surveillance and their movements watched and reported. This is to be done by men in plain clothes and no restriction of any kind put on those under this surveillance. In fact, they should not be aware that they are watched.

Reports of seditious preaching.

All case of men preaching resition to be at once reported.

Reports to be made to Government and other officials.

You must report direct to the Secretary to Government anything of importance that comes to your notice, communicating the same to the local authorities and to this office.

The agency for obtaining information, and the caution to be used.

Your sources of information should be as can be practically managed, all unknown to one another; and persons volunteering information should be treated with great caution as no doubt Ram Singh and his agents are quite up to the plan of deputing spies to give you information and obtain a knowledge of your doings.

Agents to be paid according to the value of the information.

As a rule, it has been found better not to give informers large salaries, fixed and permanent but to pay handsomely for information that is worth a good reward, and to give only bare subsistence allowance whilst the agent is searching for information.

RISE OF KUKA MOVEMENT

As directed, I have carefully perused Colonel Baillie's letter of the 8th August, on the subject of the late outrages on butchers, and also regarding the influence which Ram Singh, head of the Kuka movement, has exercised over his followers to instigate them to murderous demonstration against cow-killing, I fully agree with Colonel Baillie in the view expressed both as to the part taken by Ram Singh and the measures which should be adopted against him.

The operations of Ram Singh and his Subahs are as yet generally confined to the districts of Ludhiana, Ferozpur, Jalandhar, Hoshiarpur, and Sialkot. In neighbouring districts there are a few Kukas, but they have not assumed any position of importance in the eyes of the people generally. At the same time there is no doubt, that (Guru) Ram Singh is a man of considerable ability and mark, and that, assisted by his staff of Subahs and the prosperity which had hitherto attended him, he is in a position to extend his influence to a dangerous degree. **The very titles he has assumed to some extent mark progress. When first heard of as the successor of Balak Ram (Singh) of Hazro, he was known as Ram Singh Mahant afterwards as Guru Ram Singh, then as Satguru and now as Satguru Badshah.**

As his followers have increased, so have his worldly means. He now lives in a state surrounded by a band of personal attendants, sits in Darbar, and receives retainers and messengers from all parts of the country. Lately some men of small local position, such as Sardars and Jagirdars have joined him, and an attempt has been made to get up a Kuka regiment in the service of the Maharaja of Kashmir, and Kukas have been sent to Nepal with presents to the government of the State. All this show the working of an ambitious mind, and from as small beginnings have sprung in the East great results.

*Memorandum by Lieut Colonel G. Mc Andrew,
Deputy Inspector General of Police,
Ambala circle, dated 20th November 1871.*

COW PROTECTION

I am directed to forward herewith, for the information of the Government of India, copy of the proceedings in the recent Amritsar butcher's murder case.

1. Goolab Singh, of Choohur Chuck.
2. Beela Singh, of Narlee.
3. Lehna Singh, of Lopokee,
4. Futteh Singh, of Amritsar.
5. Hakim Singh, of Mourah.
6. Lainah Singh, Carpenter.
7. Mehr Singh, of Lopokee
8. Jhunda Singh, of Thutta
9. Luchmun Singh, of Chahul.
10. Bhugwan Singh, of Mehrana
11. Lall singh, Constable.
12. Laynah Singh, Kookah Soobah.

Charge, against accused, Nos. I to 10, murder of butchers at Amritsar, on the 14th and 15th June, Section 302, Indian Penal Code ; against 11 and 12, abetment of murdr.

On the 13th, Lall Singh, of Thutta, made a statement to effect, that about twenty days prior to the commission of the murders, he had come in with a party headed by Raja Singh, Soobah of Tandree Mianee, intending to commit the murders. That on hearing of the inurders having been committed, he asked Jhunda Singh (accused 8), who admitted he had had a share in them.

Statements were made to the Deputy Inspector General by other witnesses on the 14th. A Gundnssa, said to have been found in the boundaries of the village where, Goolab

Singh says, he concealed his, was shown to Goolab Singh, but said by him not to be his, From the other circumstances it does not appear to belong to the case.

To-day, 15th August, Futteh Singh, Hakim Singh, and Lainah Singh, prisoners 4 to 6, were examined by me as to their whereabouts on night of offence. Lainah Sing (prisoner 6) said he was, on the night of the murders, with the murderers, and made a statement conforming in a number of details the statements before made by the other prisoners who confess. He said, ten Kookas were concerned, and gave the names of prisoners 1,2,3,5, and 6, and accused 9. He described how he and Luchman Singh had hidden their weapons, one an axe and one a sword, —in a well and boosah stack; and shown four axes, amongst which the one recovered from a well. On information of Goolab Singh (prisoner 1) he said that was the weapon he had carried. He said he did not strike a blow.....Lainah Singh says he was told by Goolab Singh (prisoner 1) that the Guru (Ram Singh) had directed the murder of butchers. Lainah Singh also said that the third evening, prior to the murder , he was present at a home festival held at Layhah Sing's (prisoner 12) house by a gang who thence started to carry out the murders, but turned back finding the gates closed. Lall Singh (prisoner 11), he said, was in the murder conspiracy.

—Under Secy. Punjab to Secy. Govt. of India Home Deptt. 21 Oct. 1871.

SUPREME SACRIFICE IN 1871

The events that preceded the perpetration of these outrages are detailed in the memorandum dated 28th July 1871, hereto annexed, a copy of which was forwarded to Her Majesty's Secretary of State with Judicial despatch from the Government of India, No. 20 dated 28th July 1871. These are briefly as follows: During the months of April and May of that year considerable excitement prevailed in the city of Amritsar on the subject of the slaughter of kine. This excitement was to an extent hitherto unusual, and, there is reason to believe, owed its origin mainly to the exposure of beef for sale in the city, and the fact of one Dewah Singh, a Sikh, irritated by this exposure, taking a beef bone into the temple and placing it in front of the grunth. Prompt measures were adopted by the local authorities to allay the excitement. Recognizances were taken from the butchers and other employed in the slaughter of kine, that nothing should be done in any way calculated to offend the prejudices of the Hindoos and Sikhs. The Commissioner held a durbar on the 3rd of June, and carefully explained the wishes and orders of Government, and, after the commissioner's address had been delivered, many of the Hindoo and Mahomedan gentlemen present "embraced each other in their anxiety to show that no traces of the ill-feeling engendered by the late disturbances remained in their minds."

It was thus believed that the bad feeling that existed had completely died out, and from the date of the Commissioner's durbar till the 14th of June the local authorities had not any suspicion or information as to what was about to occur. On the night of the date last mentioned a

sudden attack was made on the slaughter-house near the city of Amritsar by an armed gang. Four of the inmates of the house were killed outright, and three others were severely wounded. The criminals escaped, unrecognized and unpursued, in the darkness of the night; but they left behind a chukkur (quoit or disc of steel worn under the turban by Akalis) and a blue turban which, as it was afterwards discovered, were left on the spot with the intention of diverting suspicion from the real perpetrators and casting it on the Akalis.

Again, at about 11 P.M. on the 15th of July, a similar outrage was committed by a gang of armed men in a house occupied by butchers at a village called Raekote in the Ludiana District. The gang suddenly appeared in front of the house, and commenced to back at the sleepers down below. The owner of the house and two companions on the roof made their escape, by jumping off the rear wall of the house, and ran, calling for help, towards the town. A man and a woman were killed, and seven women and children were wounded, but the two butchers, whose murder was evidently intended, escaped, the victims being strangers temporarily residing in their house and a part of the family of one of the butchers. The assailants escaped unrecognized, and, as a storm was raging at the time, it was found impossible to light torches and to follow at once on the tracks. The tracks were taken up the following morning at day-light and carried into the Patiala territory.

With the aid of the Patiala officials, several Sikhs of the Kooka sect were arrested and brought into British territory on suspicion of having been concerned in the Raekote murders.

Two made full confessions, which led to the conviction and the execution of three of the number, named Mustan Singh, Goormookh Singh, and Mungul Singh. They were executed on the 5th August. A fourth man, named Golab Singh, who had also been condemned to death for having taken part in the Raekote murders, offered, if his life were spared, to disclose all the facts of the Amritsar case. The offer was accepted, and his statement was taken down at once. He gave the names of ten men (all of the Kooka sect) who were concerned in the latter murders, described all the Circumstances of the crime, and where some of the perpetrators of it had in their flight concealed their weapons. His statements in all particulars were found to be true. He was brought to Amritsar on the 2nd August. The next day some of the accused were arrested (others had absconded), and two of this number also confessed. The discovery of weapons in the places indicated confirmed the truth of Golab Singh's story, and of the statements made by two others named Beela Singh and Lehna Singh, who also confessed to their share in the crime. It was considered advisable during the trial to admit the latter to pardon, and to examine him as a witness in order to strengthen the evidence for the prosecution. He was chosen because he had evidently joined in the attack on the butchers under strong moral compulsion, and because he had not taken any active part in it.

The evidence given by the two informers, and the confession made by Beela Singh, satisfactorily established the guilt of the accused—

1. Futteh Singh,
2. Beela Singh.
3. Hakim Singh (Putwaree).
4. Lainah Singh (Turkhan).

5. Lall Singh (Police Constable).
6. Laynah Singh (a leading man among the Kookas).

Nos, 1 to 4 were found guilty of the crime of murder, and were sentenced to death ; Nos. 5 and 6 were found guilty of the crime of abetment of murder, and were sentenced to transportation for life.

It appeared from the evidence of the informers, and the confession of Beela Singh, that the Amritsar murders had been deliberately and repeatedly planned. Three separate attempts were made to commit the crime before the successful attack of the 14th June. All concerned in the crime belonged to the Kooka sect, and several joined in the attack most unwillingly, and were only induced to do so from fear of the consequences alleged to be probable, of offending their Guru Ram Singh.

He appears also to have attempted to get several of his followers employed as soldiers in the service of the Maharajah of Kashmir, and also in Nepal. So far as can be ascertained, he met with no success in Nepal ; but the reports received from the Government of the Punjab show that some Kookas were in the employ of the Maharajah of Kashmir, who had been persuaded to form a Kooka regiment, but, after receipt of Intelligence of the butcher murders by Kookas, the Maharaja dismissed all the men of that sect who were in his employ, and expelled them from his territory. The movements of these men in British territory were closely watched by the police.

The Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab considers that "it will be difficult, and may be impossible, to obtain against the Guru Ram Singh any such evidence as would warrant his prosecution in a criminal court." His Honor adds—"Such evidence as is procurable is now

being carefully collected, and its value tested ; and, should it appear that the evidence is conclusive, and that there is no danger of a failure in the prosecution, it will be necessary to decide whether to place him on his trial, or to deal with him in some other more convenient manner."

Ram Singh's popularity as the leader of the Kooka sect has, it is hoped, at least received a check. He was summoned as a witness for the defence in the Raekote case, and the Deputy Commissioner of Ludiana, who is , however, perhaps some-what over-confident, reported as follows after the result of the trial :— "The neck of Kookaism is broken. Seccssions are of hourly occurrence. Ram Singh is distrusted. The Kookas believe that, fearing evil consequences to himself, he gave false evidence at the trial."

One of Ram Singh's Subhas Laynah Singh, as already stated, was convicted of the crime of abetment of murder in the Amritsar case, and was sentenced to transportation for life.

Two other Subhas are now under arrest at Ludiana. On this subject the Punjab Government remarks : —"Against one, Gyani, evidence sufficient to warrant his commitment to the sessions as an abettor seems to have been obtained, and proceedings will be taken against him. The second Subha, Lakha Singh, has been summoned as a witness in the case against Gyani; but should there be sufficient evidence to criminate him, he also will be put upon his trial." And the Lieutenant-Governor proposes to adopt the same course wherever the connection of any of the Kooka Subhas (who are about 40 innumber) with the recent murders is proved. It is understood that Gyani Singh and one Ruttun Singh have since been convicted by the Commissioner of the Amritsar Division, and their case is under reference to the High Court.

-Home office, The 11th December 1871

KUKAS LEFT FOR MALERKOTLA

Late on the night of the 13th instant, Surfraz Khan, Deputy Inspector of Police of Sahnewal came in and reported that, on the same day a gang of about 100 Kookas of the Patiala State who had gone to Bhainee to be present at the Maghee Mela held there, a small gathering (at which probably 500 persons assembled) had worked themselves into a state of frenzy and declared that they would be revenged for the death of Gyanee, a culprit who has been hanged at Ludhiana last month. Surfraz Khan was present at Bhainee when this occurred. He stated to me that Ram Singh, the leader of the Kookas, went up to these men with a turban round his neck and entreated of them not to create a disturbance; that they would not listen to him; and that Ram Singh came to the Deputy Inspector and reported to him that these men were upto mischief and that he had no control over them. This occurred about 2 P.M. on the 13th. Ram Singh named Heera Singh and Lehna Singh of Sukroudei in the Patiala State as the leaders of the gang. Soon after this gang left Bhainee, and the Deputy Inspector, not-with-standing the gravity of the report made to him, thought it sufficient to tell off Sergeant of Police to see the gang out of our territory. The Sergeant returned few hours afterwards and reported that the gang had entered the Patiala State and had gone to the direction of Rampur.

Information has just reached me that last night about 7 P.M. a gang of 200 Kookas attacked the residence of Sardar Badan Singh at Malodh, wounded the Sardar and killed two men, and carried off two or three horses. Of the attacking party, ten are said to have been mounted. In this affair one of the attacking party was killed and two have been captured; Sardar Badan Singh is related to the Maharaja of Patiala, and it is probably in revenge for the assistance rendered by the Maharaja in the butcher murder case that this attack has been made on his relative. If it be true that some of Sardar Badan Singh's horses have been carried off, this is not a pleasant feature for it denotes that some other atrocity is in contemplation. I go out at once to Malodh to make inquiry into this case, and shall report to you all that I discover.

*-L. Cowon D.C. Ludhiana Reported to
Commissioner Ambala-15 Jan. 1872*

REMOVAL OF GURU RAM SINGH AND HIS SUBAS

I have the honour to inform you that I have considered it absolutely necessary for the preservation of peace in this district first, and for the peace of the whole province, to deport Ram Singh, leader of the Kooka sect, at once from the Punjab, and to send him to Allahabad for safety until the pleasure of the Government regarding his final disposal be made known.

In continuation of my letter of 19th instant I have the honour to report that I proceeded yesterday to Malodh and held Sessions there for the trial of the prisoners who had been captured thence, and concerned in the case of dacoity with murder. Four men were put on their trial and convicted on their own confession, and sentenced to death. But it is not my intention to put this sentence into execution, because a sufficient example has been made and all four of these men are most severely wounded, and two have broken limbs. In a few days I propose to commute the sentence to transportation for life.

I have received a report from Capt. Menzies, Deputy Inspector General, that Capt. Baillie found 192 Kookas in the village of Bhainee and the Subah named in the margin (Four of these Subahs, viz, the first four, were sent in to Ludhiana for despatch to Allahabd. The remainder are kept for the present in Ludhiana pending further orders) 122 of the Kookas have been sent to their homes, the remaining 50 having no homes, and no ostensible means of living, being in fact a dangerous class of this sect, who having sold all that they possessed hold themselves in readiness to perform any act that their leaders may order, will be called on to furnish security, or, in default, will be incarcerated for a period of two years according to law.

Towards morning I received by special train your instructions confirming me in the procedure, I had entered upon, and to assist in carrying out with, a party of 40 Gurkhas despatched by your orders reached me by the same train. I at once marched off the Gurkhas towards Bhainee, and was preparing to follow with the troopers when the 6 Subahs marginally named were brought in by the police (5 of these were men whose arrest has been specially ordered by the Govt.). I delayed to secure the seats for these by the up train to Ludhiana then due to

Sahnewal and at once left for Bhainee.

We found on Ram Singh's premises a large number of Kookas (some 150) from all parts of the country, among them many "Bihangams" or men who owned to no fixed place of residence, having attached themselves entirely to the Guru. There were also several women, many unaccompanied by male relatives; these were at work at the spinning wheel, and seemed quite domesticated. Food was in course of preparation at the Guru's Langer for the whole party.

The search (which occupied two days, was conducted from 1st to last under my immediate superintendence, and I was careful to see that nothing was made away with the evacuees. I found in various places cash about Rs. 1500 and ornaments, gold and silver, to a considerable value. As these were for the most parts in very insecure receptacles, I deemed it advisable to collect the whole in one strong box (after preparing a list of them), together with the more valuable shawls and embroidered chogas and despatched the whole for deposit in the treasury.

I also forwarded to Sudder the boxes containing Ram Singh's wearing apparel. I then secured the premises under lock and key and placed in charge a police guard of twenty constables under Deputy Inspector Amrao Ali Shah.

Party of Mastanas had got beyond his control, but even then he did not disclose their intention of going to Kotla. I have already alluded to this in a former letter. This fact, coupled with his admissions of knowledge of the proceedings of his followers in the Raikote and Amritsar murder cases, regarding which he acknowledged, that he maintained complete silence, will doubtless have great weight with the Lt. Governor, when considering the necessity of the step which I took in summarily deporting Ram Singh.

As regards his property some of which Colonel Baillie has on his own authority brought into Ludhiana. I request that orders may be given at an early date. Colonel Baillie conducted the search for arms in a regular and proper manner.

-T.D. Forsyth, Commissioner Ambala, To
The Secretary Punjab Dated 18-20 Jan, 1872

HISTORICAL SOURCE ISSUE
2002

COMPLETE SEARCH OF KUKA HEAD QUARTER, BHAINI SAHIB

Mr. Jackson has returned and reports that he has made a complete search, digging up the grounds to a considerable depth wherever he thought it likely that arms or treasure might be buried, but that no trace of either has been found.

Ram Singh's income was largely from the gifts of his followers. Notably large sums were given to him by Mangal Singh, a Jagirdar Sardar of the Patiala State, recently put under arrest by the Maharaja, but his expenses were great. He fed large number of persons daily and it is not believed that he accumulated treasure. Ram Singh was in the habit of lending money to his followers and in this way possibly a good deal of money was distributed; and it is believed that when large sums came in the Subhas, Lakha Singh, Subha Singh and Gopal Singh appropriated a good portion to their own use.

Colonel Baillie attached all the personal property of Ram Singh including grain (not a large store), clothings, ornaments etc., and I learnt few days ago with some surprise that the Native Police Officer at Bhainee was serving out rations to the members of Ram Singh's family out of this store of grain. As this proceedings is I believe, in excess of your instructions as I understand them and is moreover quite unnecessary. I have directed that the grain, household implements etc. may be made over to the father, brother and daughter who are residing at Bhainee.

The clothing, ornaments and money found in the house were sent to me by Colonel Baillie. Their value does not probably exceed Rs. 2000/- I have addressed the Magistrate of Allahabad to know if I shall send Ram Singh's wardrobe to him and have desired that he will ask Ram Singh to whom I shall make over the money and ornaments.

Bhagwan Singh, one of the insurgents sentenced to death by you at Malodh has given me some further information respecting the intention of the leaders of the raiders. Had they been successful in procuring arms in Kotla they expected to be joined by large numbers. Then the main body was to proceed to attack Nabha, one detachment was to tear up the rails on this side of Ambala to prevent reinforcements arriving from Delhi and agents were to have been despatched to Ferozepur and Lahore to endeavour to effect rising in those places.

L. Cowan D.C. Ludhiana to Commissioner Ambala

26th Jan. 1872

EVIDENCE CONCERNING KUKA REVOLT

I have added notes of my own on the whole evidence thus collected, and may here give a brief summary.

For some time past the more ambitious of the Kukas sect have busied themselves in planning and compassing the murder of butchers so as to put a stop to cow-killing, this action being in direct defiance of the British Government.

Prophecies of the overthrow of the English and the Khalsa rule have been circulated amongst the Kukas, and there was a general rumour that this year, 1872, was to witness some great display of the Kuka Guru's power. Kukas sold their land and got rid of their property so as to be free to take part in the coming strife, which was expected to take place in (Cheyt) April, but was precipitated by the action of certain Subahs who, on the plea of talking vengeance for the death of Gyani Singh, hanged at Ludhiana for complicity in the butcher murders, formed the plea of sending a body of 100 men to seize capital of the Malehr Kotla State where arms and horses would be found and distributed to the rest who should join.

After this an attack was to be made on Nabha, Jheend, and Patiala : the rail road between Ludhiana and Ambala was to be broken up. They then expected to be joined by Kuka insurgents from all sides.

In prosecution of this design a party of Kukas proceeded from Ram Singh's village, and an attack was made by them on Kotla.

Kukas were seen advancing in that direction, expecting to find their brethren in possession. They disappeared on hearing of the action taken by the local authorities. Lakka Singh Sooba, and chief agent of Ram Singh, was present at the consultation held at Bhainee, had promised to follow and set out to beat up recruits. Guru Ram Singh made no report of the intentions of his followers till interrogated by the Police Officer, and then only pleaded inability to restrain their acts.

Note on the evidence regarding plans of Kuka Sect.

We have the statement of Ram Singh given before me on the 18th January last, that for some time past the Kukas had been asking leave to kill the

butchers but, as he says, he forbade them. This shows that there was a design on their part to put a stop to cow-killing. Now it is well-known that, under the British rule, cow-killing is allowed, and it would be one of the first acts of a Sikh Government which got the upper hand of our Government to put an end to this practice. When the Delhi massacres were first reported in 1857, the Sikhs in Rupar at once wished to pronounce the British authority at an end, and proclaimed in the bazars that cow killing was forbidden. The Chief Sikh concerned in that business was at once hanged. The very fact then of the Kukas desiring to put a stop to this practice must have been known to one and all of them as being a symptom of a desire to take active measures for introducing the Sikh rule, Ram Singh in his statement acknowledges that there was a talk about the Amritsar murders before they were actually committed. After they were committed, he was asked to allow the Raikote murders, he says he forbade them. But, assuming this to be true, it was imperatively incumbent on him at once to report to the authorities all that he knew so as to prevent further bloodshed. His excuse, that having expressed his prohibition he thought he had done enough, will not avail, for he had adopted this course in the matter of the Amritsar murders, and yet they had been committed. There is then in my mind, no doubt that but Ram Singh knew perfectly well of the intentions of his followers to put a stop to cow-killing, and he must have known that such action was a defiance of the British Government.

It is important to read carefully the memorandum drawn up by Mr. J. W. Macnabb, dated 4th November 1871. He specially alludes to the prophecies regarding the re-establishment of the Sikh rule. I would also call attention to the statement made by Ganga Pershad, formerly Extra Assistant Commissioner.

Evidence is required of an organised plan of rising.

For this we have the information given by Extra Assistant Commissioner, Narain Singh, from time to time. This may, in some instances, have been given

in the form of written reports to the Inspector General, but to me they were given verbally.

The reports furnished by the Patiala Vakil of 23 Kukas in Sekrooudee selling their lands and throwing away their property, expressing their intention of joining the Guru.

The Jheend Vakil gives the statement of one man Dewa Singh, who was observed to sell his land and throw away his property, who on being interrogated, said that he was to join his Guru, and in (Cheyt) next April there was to be a disturbance.

Other instances of men leaving their village to join their Guru, selling their lands, are mentioned by Patiala Vakil and by Mr. Cowan.

The evidence of the lumberdars and others in Bhainee shows that no disguise was made the assemblies of the Kukas as to the real ambitious schemes of their sect.

There is an important passage in Gyani Singh's statement thereon, his trial for the Raikot murders. He said "the Mustanahs among the Kukas all believe that they are soon to rule over the country." He then adds - "Bishen Singh, Soobah, is making converts in Cabal; Narain Singh, at Gwalior; Kan Singh, in Banares; Nahung Singh and Saheb Singh are told off for Nepal. Heema Singh is Soobah in Kashmir. There are numbers of Kukas in the Native armies. There are thousands in the English army. Johawir Singh, Soobah, has given orders that the number of Kukas in the army is not to be made known. Letters and messages frequently come to Ram Singh from the rulers of Nepal and Jummoo."

That there was some idea of a rising in Cheyt (April) is clear. But apparently matters were precipitated, and from the following evidence we learn that a plan was formed at Bhainee, during the Maghee fair, 11th, 12th and 13th January for a party of Mustanahs to at once avenge Gyani Singh's death by murdering the butchers at Malehr Kotla, and seizing arms there. Now for what purpose would arms be wanted? For midnight murders they had sufficiently deadly weapons in the well sharpened steel axes, and gundassas carried by them.

*J. W. Macnabb to L. H. Griffin
Secretary Govt. of Punjab.*

REPORT ABOUT KUKAS

Requests they will instruct District Superintendents of Police to report, in each case, the name, parentage of orthodox Sikh or of any other person who has given security personally, or given money security for a Kuka.

*—Memo to All DIG Police,
8th March 1872*

NO ILLEGAL ACTION OF KOTLA

You have done admirably, but for heaven's sake don't let the whole thing fall short of perfect success by any hasty act.

By dealing with the men now caught as culprits in the Kotla territory, they can be hanged legally, without the delay of sending the case to the Chief Court, by attending to the form usual in all such cases, i.e. sending up the proceedings to me and to save time and trouble, I am going out to Kotla soon as I have disposed of Ram Singh. But if you hang (yourself) these men, i.e., the men caught at Malodh, you will fall short of perfect success. A delay of 12 hours can not produce harm whereas illegal action may cause trouble. I only wait for Ram Singh to come in tomorrow morning, and I shall be out at once.

*—Mr. Forsyth The Commissioner of Ambala to Cowars, DC. Ludhiana on
17th jan, 1872*

I SHALL COME BACK TO AVENGE

I shall Pass Ten Months in the Womb of a Jat Mother and come Back to avenge Myself. Your Justice is a Lie. Your Death and Downfall is Near at Hand. We shall be Born again, Hold the Sword in our Hand, and Wage a War which will Destroy Your Rule.

-A Kuka (before being hanged)

"I have completed the work for which I had been ordered by Guru Tegh Bahadur. I do not want to do anything more. I am now waiting for the consequences. I do not want that anybody who is innocent should suffer with me. Therefore, those who want to go should depart at once. But those who want to offer themselves for martyrdom should remain here."

S. Hira Singh

PUNISHMENT WAS IMPERATIVELY NECESSARY-Cowan

When I reached Kotla the situation was very grave. The greatest alarm and consternation prevailed throughout this part of the country. Fields were deserted and all ordinary occupations abandoned by the people of the villages between Ludhiana and Kotla. The men were collected in crowds in the gateways of the villages, and the women on the housetops, eager for information which reached them in exaggerated form.

On reaching Kotla I found that the rebel gang had been captured a few miles off in the Patiala State. I received information that small parties of Kookas were flocking towards Kotla from distant parts, and I learnt that the troops of the Kotla state had given up the pursuit of the rebels and had returned to Kotla to protect the town from another attack. As the contingents from the adjoining native states had arrived, and all were close at hand, I felt confident that in the presence of such a force and with the arrangement I hurriedly made, there was no fear of an immediate attack on Kotla or any place in this neighbourhood; but that terrible example was needed to put a stop at once to what was assuming the proportions of a rebellion, and to prevent a recurrence of similar outrages at a future time, I therefore determined to execute near the scene of their crime a number of the rebels who were taken red-handed, and all of whom confessed their crime, and to execute the remainder at Malodh. I arrived at this determination after long and painful thought. I was sensible of the great responsibility I was incurring, but I acted in the honest conviction that what I did was in the best interests of Government and of society.

The later information received confirms the belief that a serious outbreak was intended, and that matters were precipitated by the hasty action of this fanatical party before the arrangements of the leaders were fully matured for several days. After the attack, parties of Kookas arrived from all parts, and on hearing the fate of their brethren instantly dispersed and disappeared. Had the larger number of rebels captured been detained in custody to await a formal trial, there is not the slightest doubt that similar atrocities would have been committed in other parts and that a state of anarchy would have followed.

With this explanation I leave myself in the hands of government. I acted from no vain motive or from cruelty or a desire to display authority. It was my sincere conviction, that the punishment, terrible as it was, was imperatively necessary to prevent the spread of insurrection

*From L. Cowan D.C. Ludhiana to T.D. Forsyth Commissioner Ambala
Dated 21 January 1872*

GURU RAM SINGH'S DEPORTATION TO BURMAH.

My telegram of the 9th instant will have informed the Chief Commissioner of the intended despatch to British Burmah of Ram Singh, the Kooka leader, a State prisoner under Regulation III. of 1818, for detention in safe custody at such place in British Burmah as the Chief Commissioner may deem expedient.

A warrant under Regulation III. of 1818, addressed to yourself, accompanies, and a fresh warrant will be issued to the officer whom the Chief Commissioner may charge with the custody of Ram Singh, as soon as this Government is informed of the place in which it is proposed to detain him.

Ram Singh is accompanied by two servants : if they continue in attendance on him they must be kept in the same confinement, and subject, in every respect, to the same rules as Ram Singh himself. This is necessary lest they be employed as channels of communication with the Punjab : it is very desirable to prevent this.

They should, therefore, be distinctly asked if they are willing to remain with Ram Singh under these circumstances, which must be fully explained to them. If they consent, a written acknowledgment of the explanation conveyed to them, and of their willingness to abide by the conditions imposed, should be taken from them. If, on the other hand, they decline, it should also be explained to them that their separation from him will be final and complete, and they should, if they persist in it, be returned to Calcutta for transmission to the Punjab by the first opportunity.

Subject to this proviso, however, and to due precautions against escape, the Governor General in Council desires that Ram Singh should not be subjected to any severity, and that he should be allowed such liberty of exercise and of taking his air as many be necessary for his

health.

I am to request that the Chief Commissioner will report fully the measures which he may decide to adopt for securing these objects, and the monthly sum which will be necessary to maintain Ram Singh. His status was that of a petty zemindar in the Punjab. If Ram Singh desires to spend his own money in additional luxuries, he may do so at the discretion of the Chief Commissioner.

—E.C. Bayley, Secy. Govt. of India to Secy to Chief Commissioner British Burmah
10th March 1872

IKRARNAMAH OF NANOO SINGH

(The original Ikrarnamha is in Urdu language in Persian script. It is produced here in Roman script.)

*Mein Nanoo Singh Punjab Ilaqa
Patiala Gaon Roorkee ka rahenewala
hal mukam Rangoon Jail yih iqrar
karta hoon aur sanadhnamah bhi likh
deta hoon. Kiswaste to yih Jail mein
apni khushi se razi-o-razamandi ke sath
yahan rahoonga. Aur khidmat mein
raja sahib apne Guru ke hamrah bila
uzr bataur kaid ke rahoonga. Kabhi koi
bat ka uzr nahin karronga aur jidhar
yih raja sahib rahenge, udhar mein bhi
rahoonga. Kabhi koi bat ka uzr karoon
to batal hai. Is waste yih sanadnamah
likh deta hoon. Lihaza sarkar ke kam
ave.*

Thumb Impression
Nanoo Singh

March 1872

OTHER PRISONERS

With regard to the other prisoners, Sahib Singh, Rur Singh, Lukka Singh, Kahn Singh, Bralima Singh, Jowahir Singh, Maluk Singh, Man Singh, Hukma Singh, Puhara Singh, Sardar Mungal Singh of Raipur, who have been arrested under the orders of the Punjab Government, there is not at present sufficient evidence before the Government of India to show that are really men of dangerous character. The Governor General in Council willingly accepted the opinion of the Local Government that their arrest was necessary at the time; but His Excellency thinks it right that if these men are to be detained after the excitement immediately arising out of the late occurrences in the Ambala Division has died away, that the Government of India should be in possession of full and sufficient evidence to support such a measure.

I am, therefore, desired to request that all the evidence existing in any shape should be collected and be reduced to writing, and, when complete, should be placed without loss of time in the hands of some civil officer of good standing and sufficient judicial experience. This officer should then proceed to Allahabad and separately examine each of the men detained. The statements made by each, whether self-exculpating or otherwise, should be taken down.

When this is done, a complete summary should be separately made of the case against every prisoner and of the evidence on which it is based, concluding with the prisoner's own statement and the opinion of the officer conducting the enquiry as to the degree of guilt attaching to each man detained and as to the expediency or other wise of releasing him.

These papers should be forwarded through the Government of the Punjab, and, in transmitting them to the Government of India, His Honor will be good enough to express his own opinion on every separate case so submitted, and to recommend with reference to the evidence and to the influence and position of the individuals concerned, whether each may be at once released or should be further detained, and, in the latter case, whether indefinitely or for what period of time.

—Home Deptt. March 1872

SUBAS OF GURU RAM SINGH

A complete list of the 22 Subas of Guru Ram Singh, as well as the oveeas in which they were functioning.

1. Giani Rattan Singh who used to Sert out disputes.
2. Lakha Singh — Functioned in Hoshiarpur and Jullundur.
3. Sahib Singh — Was an important Suba and accompanied Guru Ram Singh everywhere.
4. Kahan Singh - Was active in Hoshiarpur, Malwa, Ambala and Kohistan.
5. Narain Singh -Ferozepore.
6. Soodh Singh Ambala, Malwa and Majha.
7. Hookma Singh - Ludhiana and Majha.
8. Pahara Singh - Ludhiana and Gujaranwala.
9. Jawahir Singh - Ferozepore and adjoining places.
10. Sumund Singh - Ferozepore.
11. Aroor Singh - Amritsar.
12. Raja Singh - Amritsar
13. Bhagwan Singh - was functioning in Amritsar and Hoshiarpur,
14. Jota Singh - Sialkot and Lahore.
15. Gopal Singh - Lived and ran a shop at Bhainee.
16. Brahma Singh - Jullundur, Gujaranwala, Lahore and Sialkot.
17. Khazan Singh - Lahore and Amritsar.
18. Surmukh Singh - Patiala.
19. Khushal Singh - Sirsa- Hissar
20. Jumit Singh - Sialkot and around.
21. Malook Singh - Ferozepore.
22. Man Singh - Hissar, Ferozepore

ADDRESS OF SIKH SARDARS

The address of the Sikh Sardars at Amritsar. Speech read by Sardar Dyal Singh Majithia Amritsar on the part of deputation of Sikh nobles and priests, appointed by the Sikhs of the city and district of Amritsar, in Urdu and reported by Home Secretary in English.

The Hon'ble the Lieutenant Governor of the Punjab:-

"We the undersigned Sikhs of all classes of Amritsar, beg unanimously submit that we have no connection or sympathy whatever with the Kuka Sect, which has recently become notorious. On the contrary we greatly differ from them on most religious principles. We are happy, that the Government has adopted most appropriate and excellent measures for controlling these wicked and misguided Sikhs, especially as the measures in question are calculated to deter ill-disposed people from committing mis-chief in future, and in the event of any member of this depraved sect committing crime to prevent suspicion falling on people of other sects, as happened in the Case of the murder of the butchers at Amritsar. Moreover the Kukas do not differ from us in religious principles only, but they may be said to be our mortal enemies. Since by their misconduct and evil designs, they injured our honour in the estimation of the government, and well-nigh levelled with the dust, the services performed in 1857, through which we were regarded as well-wishers and loyal subjects by the government. But as the proverb says. "Truth is invulnerable, the government has found out that we had no share in the proceeding of the 10 Sikhs. And regarding the Kuka Sikhs, as our enemies, we are thankful to the government for the measures which have been adopted whereby the desires of our hearts have been fulfilled. Signed.

*Govt. of Punjab to Home Secretary
Calcutta, 12 March 1872*

KOOKA MOVEMENT IN NEWS PAPERS : INDIAN STATESMAN

12th March, 1872

An Amritsar correspondent of the "Indian Statesman" says "The Kukas say that the death of Lord Mayo was caused by their Guru Ram Singh". It was a miracle of his! They say the same of the Murder of Justice Norman. The two murders they say were in revenge of the hanging of the Raikote murderers and the execution of the Kotlah rebels. They say also that the aurora was the blood of their brethren calling for vengeance from heaven. I mention this just to show the vagaries of a faith which is trying all it can to revive the maxims and practices of Gooroo Govind Singh, who turned Sikhism into a martial confederacy. There can be no doubt that the aim of the Kookas is the restoration of the Khalsa to its pristine power and actively as a military organisation. Let those who don't know what this means read up the History of the Sikhs, and they will see what we have escaped from by the suppression of the Kooka insurrection. I may state that I do not mention this in defence of Mr. Cowan. I do not know that gentleman and have never seen him even but I do happen to know something about the swaying to and fro of the Punjab public, and I cannot help thinking that it would be wiser if people would, before condemning Mr. Cowan, ascertain the whole facts of the case. The mere fact of the Punjab Government supporting that gentleman should go a long way with people who are far away from the province. For my own part, though I pity the poor Kookas who were executed, I really do not see how Mr. Cowan could have acted other than as he did. I have pitied them along but pity is wasted on fanatics.

PRECAUTIONS TAKEN TO SUPPRESS KUKA MOVEMENT

I am desired to reply to your letter No. 712 P, dated 22nd March, in which you state that the Governor-General-in-Council will be glad to learn what precautions, His Honor has taken with a view to the possibility of the rising referred to in the 3rd paragraph of my letter of the 9th March, and to be favoured with Lieut-Governor's opinion of the nature and credibility of the information which have reached him.

The information received on this subject is necessarily somewhat general in its nature. It consists of the current reports and belief of the people, the statements of informers, the concurrent reports of the Police Agents and Civil officers in the Divisions of Lahore, Umritsar, Jullundur, and Umballa, and its general tendency, is to the effect that the Kookas meditated a rising against the Government at some convenient times either during the festival of Holee or the Basaikhi and the locality for the outbreak was at different times placed in the Sialkote and Goojranwala Districts, and in the Umballa Division and the Cis-Sutlej States, whilst at the same time it was given out that disturbances would commence at Umritsar or Anoundpoor. Nothing more definite than this was asserted and the Lieut-Govenor believes the reasons to have been that the Kookas themselves while meditating some outbreak to maintain their reputation and encourage such of their Co-religionists as might be wavering, had not fixed upon any particular place or time. But were generally watching a favourable opportunity for creating a disturbance.

The precautions which have been taken by this Government would seem amply sufficient to prevent any rising of this fanatical sect. Statistics were carefully prepared some months ago before the Kookas had commenced to abandon their distinctive name and dress; in all districts of the Punjab. The Lieut-Governor, while not accepting these statistics as absolutely reliable, yet considers that they include the greater number of professed Kookas in the province and form a sufficiently accurate return for practical purpose and for police supervision.

The principal leaders of the Kooka sect have been deported from the province. All those of influence who remain are under surveillance and their movements are carefully watched. The headmen of rural circles (zeldars) and the headmen of villages have been enjoined to report, under penalty of deprivation of office or other punishments, the movements of the Kookas with in their villages or circles.

The assembly of more than five Kookas has been forbidden throughout the Province. The carrying in public places of axes, iron-bound sticks, and other weapons which if not coming under the provisions of the Arms Act, but are still formidable in the event of a riot, has been strictly prohibited. A complete system of surveillance and report has been established with reference to the whole sect and the Lieut-Governor believes that no movement of the smallest importance can possibly take place without the government being intantly aware of the same.

With reference to the places at which a

rising was predicted, viz, Umritsar and Annundpoor, I am to state that His Honor the Lieut-Governor has himself been at Umritsar during the whole time of the Holee festival which has passed off with the greatest quiet and order, the people of the city of Umritsar and its neighbourhood having shown the best possible temper and indeed, the most friendly disposition towards the Government. At Annandpoor, where a large assemblage of pilgrims, including among them, many of the fanatical sect of Nihangs and Akalis, has been accustomed together for the Holee, extra precautions were taken. The police force was strengthened. A detachment of Cavalry was moved from Umballa to Roopur to be within reach, should its services be required, and the Commissioner of the Divison, and the Deputy Commissioner of the District were both present. Mr. Melvill, the Commissioner, who has sent daily reports to government of the progress of the fair, states that every thing has passed off with the utmost quiet and that the temper it is anticipated, that of the people was excellent, that the Basakhi Fair, which will presently take place at Umritsar will pass off without disturbance.

The Lieut-Governor desires me to say in conclusion that the same watchfulness over the movements and sentiments of the Kooka sect. which has been effectual in the past, will be strictly maintained for the future, though it will be no doubt politic to remove shortly some of the restrictions to free movements of such of the Kookas as bear a good character, as the object, of government is not to keep up a feeling of irritation and proscription, but to induce them to become again quiet members of the community.

*Secy. Govt. of Punjab, Lepci Griffin
B. D. 1872*
Dated 2nd April 1872

NAMDHARIS- A SIKH MOVEMENT

Namdhari or Kuka (Panjabi, adherent of divine name). A Sikh movement which others regard as a sect, although Namdharis regard themselves as a revival of Sikh orthodoxy. The Namdhari movement was founded in the 19th cent. by Balak Singh's disciple, Ram Singh, who based himself at Bhaini Sahib, Panjab. Balak Singh's insistence on the importance of repeating God's name (Nam) gave his followers their title. The alternative name, Kuka, resulted from the ecstatic cries (Panjabi, kuk) of Ram Singh's followers during worship.

Namdharis regard their belief in an indispensable, ever-living Guru, apart from the scriptures, as consonant with the Adi Granth, but this tenent is rejected by other Sikhs. According to Namdharis, Guru Gobind Singh did not die at Nander, but continued to travel, finally bestowing the Guruship on Balak Singh. While awaiting the return from exile of Ram Singh, the Namdharis look upon (Guru) Jagjit Singh as their Guru, in succession to Ram Singh's brother, Hari Singh and nephew, Partap Singh.

Under Ram Singh's leadership the movement aimed at social uplift, particularly of women, at ending British rule, and protecting the cow from Muslim butchers. The Namdharis' life is strictly disciplined. They must rise early, bathe, then meditate upon a mantra confided to each by the Guru. A woolen rosary of 108 beads is used. Their diet is vegetarian and dress must be simple, with the turban tied flat across the forehead as in portraits of Guru Nanak. Ostentation in the gurdwara is avoided. Namdharis preserve the most traditional style of kirtan, valuing music highly. The Guru resides at Bhaini Sahib. In Britain there are important centres at East Ham and Birmingham.

Namdharis have simple corporate marriages during 'melas'. The ceremony should cost only a nominal sum. Receptions and engagement ceremonies are forbidden. The couples must dress in white, the groom wearing kachh, the bride leaving her face uncovered. They receive amrit and each bride puts a woolen rosary around her groom's neck. In succession couples circle a sacred fire while the 'lavan' are read.

Oxford University press- oxford 1997

SHIFTING OF STATE PRISONER'S RESIDENCE.

No. 1045, dated Simla, the 12th June, 1872

From

E.C. Bayley, Esq., CSI

Secy. to the Government of India

To

The Chief Commissioner of British Burma

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your Secretary's letter No. 200-53 P, dated the 13th April, last, relative to the provision of appropriate accomodation for the Kuka Chief Ram Singh and the adjustment of the charges incidental to his detention in British Burma.

In reply I am desired to State that the recommendation made in paragraph 5 for locating Ram Singh in the Cantonment Post Office Building, is approved, and you are requested to submit an estimate of the expense which will be incurred in the necessary repairs. The purchase of a pony carriage for outdoor exercise as suggested in paragraph 6 cannot be sanctioned, but I am to observe that if such excercise is considered absolutely requisite by the medical authorities, a carriage can be occasionally hired for the purpoe.

As regards the adjustment of the charges connected with Ram Singh's maintenance, I am desired to forward for your information and guidance a copy of a Resolution from the Financial Department No. 3458, dated the 14th ultimo.

Resolution : In the opinion of this Department the best plan of adjustment would be to add the actual cost of Ram Singh's imprisonment to the Burmah Provincial Service Grant for each year. Orders to this effect can be issued on the amount of actual cost being reported to this Department.

RESIDENCE IN RANGOON JAIL

In reply to our letter No. 154-53 dated 25th Ultimo, I have the honour to report that state prisoner Ram Singh is lodged in an upstair house, formerly used as a female prison, within the walls of the Central Jail here. the enclosure within which the house stands has been palisaded and boarded up on the south side to separate it entirely from the adjacent enclosure of the Europeon prisoner ward, and contains a well, cook house and latrine. He has been provided with a bed, chairs, punkha etc; he is allowed to do as he likes, and is perfectly free within the enclosure, and is not locked up at night, as he wishes to sleep outside on the ground during the hot weather. The only restriction on him is that he is not allowed to communicate with the other world.

Three high caste Hindoo prisoners have been allowed to him as attendants, as only one servant arrived with him here from India.

A cow has been bought for him; she is kept in the enclosure of his house. He is allowed to have every thing he wants in the shape of food, but his requirements seems to be moderate.

The cost for food for himself and sevant will be about Rupees 40 per mensem; shoes and clothes, to the amount of Rupees 40, have been supplied to him, the cow cost Rupees 75, and the chairs, table, punkha and cot supplied by the Jail are worth about Rupees 50.

He appears to be in good health, but is depressed and restless especially at night, and complains much of heat, although the building in which he is lodged is as cool as any place can be in Rangoon during the hot weather.

—W.P. Kelly, Inspector General of
Prisons British Burma. Dated March 1872
Rangoon

POLITICAL CHARACTER OF NAMDHARI SIKHS

I am now directed to express the carefully considered opinion of the Lieutenant-Governor, that (Guru) Ram Singh and all his Subahs, now at Allahabad, and now referred to in the preceding paragraph, be removed from India to Rangoon, or to such other place out of British India, which may appear to His Excellency the Viceroy and Governor General appropriate. Allahabad itself on the main line of communication, and a noted place of Hindoo pilgrimage, is open to many objections.

The Lieutenant-Governor observes that the papers, which have been submitted to the Government of India, show that whatever the original tendency of the Kuka doctrine may have been, they have now become of a political character ; the designs of the leaders, more or less understood by their followers, being to attempt a restoration of the Sikh power in the Punjab. The evidence which proves this is not all of such a nature as to be placed on formal record, although the Lieutenant-Governor believes that sufficient has already been submitted to convince the Government of India of its correctness. There is, in addition, the unanimous belief among loyal and intelligent natives, that the Kuka movement is one which the Government cannot afford to treat with indifference ; the conduct bearing of the Kukas themselves, and the prophecies current among them of the near approach of the time when the English would be expelled from the country, and the followers of Guru Ram Singh receive lauds and honors.

The Hon'ble the Lieutenant-Governor, while, under no apprehension of any rising, which could not be promptly suppressed, is yet most strongly of opinion that the sentiments of which the Kuka creed in the outward sign and expression is one which should be, if possible, eradicated. The real danger of that creed in the form which it has now assumed consists in this,

that it appeals strongly to the sympathies of a large section of the Native community outside the circle of avowed Kukas. The denunciation of kine-killing, and even the active measures taken against butchers at Raikote and Umritsur, have enlisted to a certain extent the sympathies of even well disposed Hindoos ; while the predictions of a restoration of the Khalsa appeal to the sympathies of all Sikhs who have not forgotten the traditions of the past. There is evidence, no doubt, to show that no general coalition exists at present between the orthodox Sikhs and the Kukas ; but there is also evidence to show that the hostile feelings between these sects is less strong than formerly in the recent large accession to the numbers of the Kukas from the ranks of the Sikhs, and in the fact that, while a few years ago, no men of good family and position had joined the new creed ; there is now a considerable number of petty sirdars and men of family among its avowed adherents.

There is no evidence further to show with what precise intention, or with what success Kuka, emissaries have visited distant parts of India or States, on its northern border ; but it may be safely presumed that the intention was political, and not religious, from the open assertions of the Kukas, that they expect aid from Nepal and Cashmere, that the troops of the Cis-Sutlej States would join them in the event of a rising, and that the ranks of the British Army contained numerous members of their creed.

His Honor trusts that the recommendation here made may receive the approval of His Excellency the Viceroy and Governor General in Council, and that the removal of the Kuka leaders from India, at an early date, may be ordered. The Lieutenant-Governor further considers that wherever located, they should be confined separately, and not permitted to communicate with each other.

—Home Department, June 1872

ENERGY AMONG THE KUKA SECT IS REVIVING

Information has reached the Government that there are indications of reviving energy amongst the Kuka Sect.

A Meeting of some 25 Kukas, with representations from Ferozepur, Sirsa and Ludhiana has been reported having taken place at Chuk-Lanki Khurd in Patiala territory. Another has been reported at Dipalpur, in the Montgomery District; and the Deputy Commissioner Ludhiana reports that in his district Kukas have been leaving their villages and moving about from place to place; and that on several occasions, gatherings of 25 or more have taken place; one in particular in the village of Raipur where the "Chandi-Ka-Path" was read and the ceremony of "Hom" performed.

The later points are important, because the ceremony of "Hom" though frequently performed in families who desire the attainment of some object as for instance on the occurrence of drought or pestilence is only on rare occasions performed by bodies of men other than families; so that performance of this rite by gatherings of men at a season when there is no famine or pestilence may be of some significance.

Again, it is to be remarked that the goddess Chandi, whose name is said to have been specially invoked at the Raipur meeting, is the goddess specially invoked by Guru Govind Singh, who invoked her before he organised the Sikh fraternity, and is believed by Sikhs to be the genuine through whose influence he obtained his power and success.

Under these circumstances, the Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor desires that you will impress upon your district officers the necessity for vigilance and request that they will promptly report direct to this office, as well as to yourself, any signs of movements among the Kukas in their districts and all particulars regarding meetings which may be held.

I am further to suggest that section 505 of the code of Crim. Pro., be rigorously enforced in regard to all Kukas who may be found under circumstances which justify the conclusion that they are dangerous characters; and that, if possible, section 528, empowering magistrates by written order to direct any person to abstain from acts likely to occasion risk or injury to persons lawfully employed, or of danger to human life, or of riot, may be brought to bear upon Kukas believed to be likely to take part in gatherings of the nature described above.

It would be well also. His Honor considers that all head men of villages or jails in which noted Kukas are known to reside be furnished with a translation of section 124-A of the Indian Penal Code, having reference to attempts to excite disaffection, and of section 89 of the code of Crim. Pro. requiring all persons to give information of certain offences, including the offence specified in section 124-A above quoted, and reminding them of their duty to furnish prompt information of any proceedings of the Kuka Sect of such character.

I am directed to state that the Government of the North-Western Provinces has been requested to send the three Kuka prisoners to Moulmein, where they must remain for the present. Warrants under Regulation III of 1818 have been forwarded to that Government to be sent with the prisoners. The prisoners can be removed to Tavoy or elsewhere hereafter if you think it desirable, and, on your sending intimation to this Office by Telegraph, fresh Warrants will be prepared accordingly addressed to the Keeper of the places of custody in which you propose to confine them. The law requires that Warrants should be so addressed.

Confidential Circular;

—*Govt. of Punjab to I.G. Police Punjab.*
28th August 1872

TWO KUKA STATE PRISONERS IN ADEN JAIL

I have the honor to report with reference to Government Resolution No. 1605 dated 15th Instant, that the two Kuka State Prionsers, Sahib Singh and Kahn Singh arrived here by the Mail Steamer Peshawar yesterday and that they have been lodged in the quarters which were prepared for their reception in the Aden Jail.

*-Political Resident, Aden. to Secy to
Govt. Bombay
Dated 25 March 1873*

NOT ALLOWED TO VISIT RANGOON

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 57, dated 13th January forwarding for opinion copy of a letter from the Secy. to the Chief Commissioner of British Burmah reporting the desire of the Kooka State Prisoner, Ram Singh to send for his brother to visit him.

In reply I am directed to forward in a separate packet marked Confidential copy of the papers, and to state that in the Lieutenant Governor's opinion it would be very unadvisable to accede to Budh Singh's request; on the contrary. His Honour considers that Ram Singh should not be allowed to see any persons from the Punjab, and that all his communications should be narrowly watched.

*—Secretary Punjab to Home Dept.
26th January 1875*

HEALTH IS BAD

In reply to your letter No. 929 of 1874, I have the honor to report, for the information of the Resident that both the Kooka prisoners are suffering from the effects of residence in Aden.

One of them by name Kahn Singh has been lately under treatment for ulceration of the eye, (acute-corneites) together with boils on his extremities and his general state of health is bad.

The other by name Sahib Singh, although he is not the subject of any speical disease, has become wasted, and is in a more debilitated state, than when he first arrived.

Lieutenant Governor has no objections to the two Kuka prisoners now at Aden being allowed to reside, under proper surveillance any where out of the Province of the Punjab except Allahabad.

*—Superintendent Jail to 1st Asstt. Political
Resident Aden 2nd January 1875*

REMOVAL OF STATE PRISONERS TO HAZARI BAGH

The lives of two State Prisoners (Kukas) are said to be in danger by their confinement to Aden. The Punjab Government does not object to their removal to anywhere in India out of Punjab except to Allahabad. Hazribagh might be a good place for them.

*—Governor General office note
1st March 1875*

I have the honor to inform you that the Kooka prisoner Sahib Singh, who is now confined in the European Penetentiary, is suffering from diabetes, a disease of a most serious nature though slow in its progress - I may add that Diabetes though amenable to palliative treatment is very rarely cured.

*—Civil Surgeon to Superintendent Jail
Hazaree Bagh*

HARNAM SINGH AND HIS WIFE CHANDO IN RANGOON

By the steamer which arrived here last week two persons from the Punjab named Hurnam Singh and Chando, husband and wife came to Rangoon to see Ram Singh, Kooka State prisoner. They produced in Ordo order bearing the signature also in Persian characters, and stamp of an Extra Assistant Commissioner, this they professed to have received as their authority from the Punjab Government. This paper and one other has been forwarded to the Government of India as they appear very suspicious and if not forged may have been obtained under false pretences. The couple profess to be from Furreedpore or Furreedkote near Ferozepore, their purpose merely to see their Guroo and present him with a pair of shoes, rosary and some clothers, they admit to having Rs. 200 and to having spent a great deal (for them) en route in road expenses.

Harnam Singh, about 5'9" aged 42 had a short beard present the appearance of a simpleman, can speak Hindustanee though affects not to be well up in it, and break it off in Punjabee. Has a small dark mark an inch and a half below right eye not very distinct. His wife, an evil looking creature, hooked nose, thin spare woman with large mark on back of right hand.

It was determined to send the couple back to Calcutta but they have saved us the trouble as today when called to my office, the man produced a passage order saying he was returning to India and asked for an order to save his being stopped en-route. I have told him I will send a constable, Mahomed Saib, along with him and that he must go to your office for furhter orders. This is done as I would ask you to take steps to keep the pair under surveillance so that they may not be lost sight of pending orders from the Government of India which I have no doubt will be communicated to you.

From I.G. Police British Burma To Inspector of Police Calcutta

24th April 1875

ARREST OF NATHANA SINGH

It appears that Nathana Singh arrived at Rangoon a few days ago from the Punjab in company with 26 other men of whom the chief was Hurnam Singh. These men consulted together as to the best means of communicating with Gooroo Ram Singh. Hurnam Singh pointed out to Nathana Singh where Gooroo Ram Singh was lodged, and gave him a letter which Nathana Singh threw over the wall of Gooroo Ram Singh's residence. The sentry on guard has observed Nathana Singh and was found to contain letters which are annexed to the Magistrate's proceedings. The letter thrown over by Nathana Singh could not be traced. If the translations can be relied on the letters found of Nathana Singh, have little political significance in themselves.

It seems not improbable that, so long as Gooroo Ram Singh remains in Rangoon, the attempts to communicate with him will be repeated; and it is understood that letters from Ram Singh to his followers in the Punjab cause uneasiness and unrest. The Chief Commissioner has therefore decided, notwithstanding the objections stated in my letter mentioned above, to transfer Ram Singh to the building which has been prepared at Mergui for his reception. At Mergui there will, at least, be two obstacles in communication with Ram Singh. Mergui is comparatively difficult to reach by the fortnightly mail steamer; and arrival of the natives of India, who alone would be likely to attempt interaction with Ram Singh, would be noticed, or that the movements of the men would be watched.

Ram Singh will be removed to Mergui as soon as quarters have been erected for the accommodation of the police guard, which will be in about a month. Further report will be submitted when the transfer has been effected.

The Prisoner Nathana Singh answer to questions states :

I arrived here from the Punjab ten days ago with twenty six other Punjabees. Hurnam Singh was the chief man amongst us. We all went and put up in the Krishna Temple, Phayre Street and consulted as to how to deliver a letter to Gooroo Ram Singh. Hurnam Singh wrote the letter while I was cooking rice. I was deputed to take this letter on the third day after arrival. It was rolled up in a piece of cloth. On the second day after arrival five of us went to see the Pagoda. The day before Hurnam Singh went out to make enquiries and when we were returning he showed me Gooroo Ram Singh's bungalow. The next day I took the bundle made up by Hurnam Singh and threw it over the enclosure. In a minute or two, a small bundle was thrown to me from inside. After I picked it up I was arrested by the sentry.

Secretary. to Chief Commissioner of British Burma- 13th August 1880

INTENTION OF GURU RAM SINGH

Ram Singh is very anxious that this man (Nanoo Singh) should be released; also I think his object in urging his release is that he, Ram Singh, if left without any attendant, would be able to cause even more trouble than he does at present which course he thinks might result in a recommendation for his release.

—*I.G Prisons to Secy. to C.C. British
Burma, 24th Nov. 1881.*

GURCHARAN SINGH VISITS CENTRAL ASIA

Communications have been addressed to you from time to time regarding the proceedings of one Gurcharan Singh, son of Atar Singh, Virk Jat, of Chakparana, in the Sialkot district, who has been for many years in the habit of visiting Central Asia, and has been suspected of conveying intelligence from the Russian authorities in Central Asia to members of the Kuka sect. Gurcharan Singh has recently returned to the Punjab from one of his journeys, and, on information received in the Secret Department, has been arrested, and is now in detention at Lahore.

—*From Secy. to the Govt., Punjab
Dated Lahore, 5th April 1881.*

Major-General Ibanov was greatly impressed with the personality and bearing of Gurcharan Singh as a patriot who wanted to see his country free. The Russians sent the following reply :

"Greetings from Major-General Ibanov to General Ram Singh, and Budh Singh. The letter was duly received from Guru Charan Singh, careful consideration was given to it and the contents were gratifying to know. It is only informative communication but is desirable to have details, more fresh news about the affairs and situation in India.

NAMDHARI

Namdhari A Sikh reform movement which arose in the 19th century. Its originator was Baba Balak Singh (1799-1861) and it grew under his successor Baba Ram Singh. It aimed to reform moral backsliding in the Sikh community, particularly drug and alcohol abuse, the eating of meat, caste, excessive marriage expenses, and the treatment of widows. In 1872 the British transported Baba Ram Singh to Rangoon in Burma for fomenting aggression aimed at reinstating Sikh rule in the Punjab; however, Namdharis consider that he is still alive and will come back to lead them. They also believe that the tenth Sikh guru, Guru Gobind Singh, did not die in 1798 but lived until 1812 to bestow Guruhood on Baba Balak Singh. Wearing white turbans distinctively laid flat across the forehead, they follow a reformed code of behaviour associated with Baba Balak Singh, and in their prayers they use a rosary of wool which includes 108 knots.

—*Dictionary of Beliefs and religions -
Larousse*

RESTORATION OF SIKH RULE

After the British annexation several movements, religious, social and political, occurred among the Sikhs. The Namdharis aimed at reforming religious ritual. The Namdharis or Kukas under Ram Singh sought to re-establish spartan traditions of the early Khalsa and restore Sikh rule. In January 1872 the Namdharis clashed with the police and 66 of them were apprehended and blown off from cannons at Maler Kotla, Ram Singh was exiled to Rangoon.

—*Encyclopedia Britannica 1971 Edition*

SATGURU RAM SINGH TRANSFERRED TO A REMOTE SPOT IN 1886

According to the report of Civil Surgeon, Mergui, Satguru Ram Singh expired on 29th November 1885 from an attack of Diarrhoea. But Kuka circles refused to believe on this information. Official documents which are given below belie the report. It confirms that Satguru Ram Singh was alive even after 1885 and was quietly shifted to more remote place — Editor.

THE REPORT OF CIVIL SURGEON, MERGUI

From the Civil Surgeon, Mergui, to the Deputy Commissioner, Mergui,
No. 99, dated the 29th November, 1885.

I beg to report to you upon the death of State prisoner Ram Singh, which event has taken place just this moment 4.30 P.M. The man has been in a decline sometime past, and with the setting in of the cold weather, he has had another attack of Diarrhoea and he complained of the change very much.

I beg also to report to you that I have arranged for the cremation of the body at about 8 O'Clock tomorrow morning and that I shall be present at the burial place early to see to the necessary arrangements being completed for the burning according to the Hindu custom.

REPORT OF THE CIVIL SURGEON, MERGUI, DATED 2ND DECEMBER, 1885.

The ashes were collected and cast into the river in my presence this morning. The cremation and casting of the remains into the river were done very quietly.

The men selected to perform these offices were two convicts (one of them the attendant, a Brahmin and the other a Hindoo) and two warders of the 'Brahmin caste belonging to the Jail guard.

Sir Charles Bernard, Chief Commissioner of British Burma, vide his letter dated 23rd August 1886, informed Sardar Atar Singh of Bhadaur "Ram Singh, Kuka, is going to be transferred to a more remote spot, where communication with him will be less easy." This information, from the highest authority of the British Burma, contradicts the Civil Surgeon's 'death report'. Moreover, Burma Jail Report Statement No. XVI—Vital, showing the deaths From the chief Diseases among the convicts in the jails and sub. sidiary jails of British Burma, during the year 1885, does not list any death at Mergui due to "Dysentery and Diarrhoea." The column. I in the proforma has been kept blank, (see Photo Copy).

Suba Kahn Singh, Kuka State prisoner released from Chunar Fort in 1888, was reported by the Punjab Special Branch telling the Kukas that "Guru Ram Singh is alive and will soon return."

It can, therefore, be concluded that Guru Ram Singh did not expire; on 29th November 1885. Either he was transferred to a 'more remote spot', as intimated by the Chief Commissioner of British Burma, or disappeared quite from the prison.

Letter from Sir Charles Bernard (Chief Commissioner, British Burma), to Sardar Atar Singh of Bhadaur, dated 23rd Aug. 1886.

In reply to his letter, informs him that "Ram Singh, Kuka, is going to be transferred to a more remote spot, where communication with him will be less easy." Adds some information regarding a Persian spy referred to by the addressee.

INDIAN AND HOME MEMORIS

(Reminiscences of 1872)

Sir Henry Cotton

These Reminiscences 1872 would be incomplete without some reference to what I can only describe as the massacre at Malerkotla- generally known as the Cowan's case and incident now forgotten by all but a few.

The facts may be summarised in a small space. On the 14th January (1872)-a band of 100 Kukas, a set of Sikh dissenters known to be disaffected to British Rule broke out into open violence and after making a raid on Maloudh, attacked the town of Malerkotla, the Capital of the Sikh-Satlaj State of that time. They were repelled after a bloody and obstinate fight, with heavy losses on both sides. The survivors 66 in number, including 22 who were wounded, some severely, fled into the Patiala State. There they surrendered on the 15th January (1872)- and were lodged for the night in the Fort of Sherpur.

With their surrender the Kuka rising came to an end. On the 16th January Mr. Cowan who was the Deputy Commissioner of the adjoining British District of Ludhiana, ordered the prisoners to be sent into Kotla, where he himself arrived during the day. That evening he wrote to his official superior, the Commissioner, a letter reporting that tranquility had been completely restored, and adding, that the "entire gang has been nearly destroyed. I propose blowing away from guns or hanging the prisoners tomorrow morning at day break". About noon of the following day (17th) he received a note from Mr. Forsyth, the Commissioner, desiring him to keep the prisoners at Sherpore—till a guard could be

sent from Ludhiana. The note, he says, he put in his pocket and thought no more about it. It was not until 4 P.M. in the afternoon of the 17th that the captured Kukas were marched into Kotla, and then and there without delay or the semblance of a trial, Mr. Cowan caused 49 of them to be blown away from guns. At 7 P.M. when the last batch of 6 men had been lashed to the guns there came an official order from Mr. Forsyth to send the prisoners to him for trial. In his explanation to Government, Mr. Cowan wrote of that order, "after reading Mr. Forsyth's letter I handed it over to Colonel Perkins with the remarks that it would be impossible to stay the execution of the men that such a proceeding would have the worst effect on the people around us and so the last 6 rebels were blown away as had been the 43 others before them. One man, a young boy of 13 only who would have made the 50th, broke from the guard, rushed at Mr. Cowan and caught him by his beard, but was promptly cut down by the sabres of the native officers who were in attendance.

Such was Mr. Cowan's share in the transaction. The commissioner, Mr. Forsyth, had repeatedly enjoined on him to proceed with legal formalities, and on the 17th, he telegraphed to the Government : "I am on the spot, and can dispose of the cases according to form and without delay exceptional action not necessary and would increase excitement better allayed". On the 18th however, having been informed by Mr. Cowan, of the tragedy which had been enacted, he wrote to him in the following terms, "My dear Cowan, I fully approve and confirm all you have done. You have acted admirably. I am coming out." He did come out and sanctioned within the terms

of law the execution of the 16 remaining prisoners. They were hanged. The Government of India recorded an elaborate resolution on these proceedings. It was understood to have been drafted by Mr. (afterward Justice) Fitz James Stephens, whose tenure of legal membership of Council was then drawing to a close". His Excellency in Council is under the painful necessity of affirming that the course followed by Mr. Cowan was illegal "that it was not palliated by any public necessity, and that it was characterised by incidents which give it a complexion of barbarity." And His Excellency was compelled "with deep regret to direct that Mr. Cowan be removed from service. As for Mr. Forsyth, he was severely censured and transferred to another province in a corresponding office with the same emoluments. He subsequently became Sir Douglos Forsyth having been decorated for service beyond the Forntier at Yarkand. The circumstance of this case and of the orders passed divided public opinion in India in two camps in as much the same way as Governor Eyers case in England. The sympathy of officials generally and of the Anglo-India Press was with M/s. Cowan and Forsyth. The Indian Press at this time exercised but a feable influence, but it raised its voice, such as it was, in horrow at what had occurred. For my part, can recall nothing during my services in India more revolting and shocking than these executions and there were many who thought, as I did and still think, that the final orders of the Government of India were lamentably inadequate. The Viceroy of that time was Lord Napier, who was temporarily incharge between the death of Lord Mayo and the arrival of Lord Northbrook on the 3rd of May.

KUKAS AS PER CENSUS OF INDIA

Ram Singh and his doctrines were responsible for what had happened, in Maller kotlaand he had become a danger to the State, as similar disturbances might be created at any time by his followers."

The Kookas of today : The sect is known by the name of the "Kukas" or "Shouters," because, unlike the ordinary Sikhs, they permit themselves to fall into a state of Wajad or frenzy during their religious exercises, shaking their heads and reciting their prayers in a loud voice. They finish prayer with a loud cry of "Sat Sri Akal".—"God is true," and their religious meetings are said to have often ended in disgusting orgies. They differ also from the Sikhs generally in the manner of wearing the turban (sidha pag) and in carrying a necklace of woollen cord tied in knots, which serve as beads for prayer.

The Kukas will often try to conceal the fact of their belonging to this sect and many of them call themselves "Namdhari."

Kukas Hindu... 690.

Kukas Sikh... 10,541.

Kuka Mussalmans... 5

They are also supposed to avoid meat and spirits of all kinds : and they allow marriage outside the caste. They have also a belief in Govind Singh as the only Guru and in his incarnation as Ram Singh, and look forward to the establishment of the Khalsa as a temporal dominion. Many of them refuse to believe in the death of Ram Singh and expect his reappearance. In other respects they are merely a puritanical Sikh sect of the school of Gobind, with a more marked hatred of Mahomedans, butchers and tobacco than that held by most Sikhs. In Sirsa, where there is a small colony of them under the command of one of Ram Singh's immediate adherents, they are looked on with some contempt by their Sikh neighbours as harmless fanatics, but are credited with a purer morality and a stricter regard for truth than most people

Census of India 1891: Volume XIX

Part -I

By E.D. Maclegan

VIEWS ABOUT NAMDHARI SIKHS

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Ram Singh, The Kooka.—Perhaps very few of our readers who are not in the Punjab may know who Ram Singh, the Kooka, is, and why he is honored with special notice in this journal, but there are very sufficient reasons why his name should be as familiar with the English Public as it is with the native population. Ram Singh then is the disciple of Balak Singh, who seems to have died some years back having foretold the fall of the Sikh power before the Khalsa Army were finally repulsed and the Punjab became a British Province. But Balak Singh's reputation was slight, and his name all but unknown, has been eclipsed by the fame of his successor who has been steadily, though slowly increasing the ranks of his followers, giving out that his vocation is to purify the Sikh Religion, which he declares is no longer what it used to be in the time of Govind Singh. What the actual doctrine of this new religious leader may be, it is not of much importance to enter upon now, and it will suffice to mention that, as far as can be gathered from trustworthy reports, he objects to all idol worship, to eating meat and smoking tobacco, truth telling being also a sine qua non to all who choose to adopt his creed. His followers may be known by a peculiarly shaped puggree, which is not allowed to come over the ears, and the wearing of aworsted necklace containing 108 beads.

Whether, as some suppose, under this aspect of religious fervour, are concealed plans for the overthrow of our rule, cannot now be determined; but he is said—though this is again denied—to have prophesied the downfall of British Rule in 1865, and it is a fact that he was not very long ago arrested and has eversince been under the surveillance of the Police of Lodiana where he resides. But a new feature in his case has now appeared, for he is desirous of visiting various holy Sikh Shrines, and having requested leave to go with his disciples to the great Fair at Anundpore, Makhowal, in the Hoshiarpur district, the Punjab Government, seeing no reason why his wish should not be gratified, according him the permission he demanded, and he

was informed that he might set out on his pilgrimage. Complications now arose for the Sodees, the descendants of the founder of the Sikh faith, who form the revenues of the Temple at Anundpore, are, of course, followers of the Sikh religion as it at present exists, and naturally objected to the intrusion of a reformer who no longer held to the orthodox tenets, and the position of Gouroo Ram Singh with the priests might not inappropriately be compared to that of Luther and the Roman Catholics; for we may imagine Luther declaring his was the true faith and persisting in performing Protestant service in Cologne Cathedral, much to the horror of the Catholic priests who guard the bones of the eleven thousand vergins and other holy relics. But there is a difference in the present religious dispute, and it is that the Anundpore shrines are open to all Hindoos; Sikhs or Mohammedans, and thus for Ram Singh, and his followers, to apply for enterance to the temple, is not such an extraordinary report as at first sight may appear. Whatever the fancies of outsiders might be on this head, it was pretty patent that the fanaticism of the Sodees would interpose very formidable obstacle to any thing like a peaceful entrance, and the event proved that it was only by the nearest good fortune there was not bloody tumult.

Ram Singh is of a thin habit of body, about 50 years of age some 5 feet 10 inches in height, but a slight stoop makes him look shorter. His eyes are deep set and close up to the eyebrows, which are almost covered with the puggree that he wears low over the forehead. The nose is beaked, with small nostril and high cheek bone make his eyes smaller than they are, while a thin wiry moustache and beard cover the lower part of the face, but do not conceal the contour of the jaw. In conclusion it may be added, that he is slightly marked with the small pox, and has a furtive expression of countenance; but his manner is gentle and quite, and he, to an ordinary observer would be considered a politely behaved man. Such is the individual who has got already together a sect of over 100,000 men, and it is for the Government to determine whether it is safe for a man who wields such enormous power as does Ram Singh, to wander about the country, a sort of demi-God for the people to fall down and worship.

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RAM SINGH

b.1816, Bhaini, Punjab, India-d. 1885, Mergui, Burma Sikh philosopher and reformer and the first Indian to use non-cooperation and boycott of British merchandise and services as a political weapon.

Ram Singh was born into a respected small farming family. As a boy, Ram Singh became a disciple of Balak Singh, the founder of the austere Namdhari movement, from whom he learned of the great Sikh Gurus and heroes and of the Khalsa (Sikh military brother-hood). Balak Singh appointed him leader of the Namdharies upon his death.

At the age of 20 Ram Singh entered the army of the Sikh Maharaja Ranjit Singh. Three years later, on the death of Ranjit Singh, the mainstay of the Sikhs, his army and domain fell apart. Worried about British power and Sikhs weakness, Ram Singh determined to help Sikhs regain their self-respect. He introduced new practices among the Namdharies, who came to be called Kukas (from Panjabi *kuk*, "scream," or "cry") because of the shrieks they emitted after the frenzied chanting of hymns. His sect was more puritanical and fundamental than other Sikh sects were. Namdharies wore white, handwoven robes, bound their turbans in a distinctive way, carried wooden staves and rosaries of wool, and used special greetings and passwords. Their gurdwaras ("temples") were Spartan in their simplicity. Ram Singh instilled a sense of worth and dignity into his disciples (nearly all of humble origin) by telling them they were the elite of God and that other sects were *mleccha* ("unclean"). His private army even had its own couriers, in order to boycott the British postal service and to prevent messages from falling into enemy hands.

In 1863 Ram Singh attempted a grand gesture; his followers were to meet him at Amritsar (the Sikh holy city), where he would proclaim himself the reincarnation of Guru Gobind Singh and declare that he had come to form a new Kuka Khalsa. The police intervened, however, and Ram Singh was restricted to his native village for an indefinite pe-

riod. As the years passed and his prophecy of breaking British rule remained unfulfilled, internal trouble broke out. Realizing they were no match for British power, the Kukas began to attack the Muslim community.

Following a particularly bloody incident, armed bands of Sikhs attacked Maler Kotla, a Muslim community, and a large number of the attackers were captured by the British. This attack was particularly heinous to other Sikhs because relations with Maler Kotla and its inhabitants had been friendly since 1705, when its leaders interceded with the Mughal emperor Aurangzeb in an attempt to save the sons of Gobind Singh from execution. The British, sensing that this was no mere bandit raid but the start of a revolt in the Punjab, dealt with the Kukas in a barbarous way: the prisoners were blown to bits.

A HISTORY OF THE SIKHS

VOLUME 2, 1839-1988

The Kukas, nevertheless, more strictly adhere to the puritanical faith of Guru Nanak and Guru Gobind than other Sikhs. Their gurdwaras are not ostentatious, and their worship is devoid of the elements of idolatry (rich canopies and coverings over the *Granth*, waving of censers, etc.) which have become common practice in orthodox circles. And the Kukas themselves lead austere lives; they wear the simplest of clothes and observe a rigid code of conduct; they are punctilious in attending service in their gurdwaras and in observing the tabus of food, and personal deportment. They also have a place in the history of the freedom movement of India. Guru Ram Singh was the first man to evolve non-cooperation and the use of *swadeshi* (indigenous goods) as political weapons. The boycott of British goods, government schools, law courts, and the postal service and the exhortation to wear only hand-spun cloth (*khaddar*) which Guru Ram Singh propagated in the 1860's were taken up again sixty years later by Mahatma Gandhi.

Khushwant Singh

CORRECT PERSPECTIVE OF SIKH HISTORY

Sikhism was at the lowest ebb in the Sikh history after the regime of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. Britishers had completely taken over India socially, morally, and politically and were interfering and playing with the religious and spiritual sentiments of every countryman to their advantage and were firmly establishing the hold on India for their permanent stay. Indian masses accepted them as the will of God and started living the lives of slaves.

Sikhism was almost at the stage of extinction, when Guru Ram Singh appeared on the scene in Punjab. Guru Ram Singh thought about it and revived the basic concept of Sikhism and its initiation by Guru Gobind Singh. He created Sant Khasla with rejuvenated spirit in the second half of the nineteenth century, when India was passing through the darkest period of history.

Guru Ram Singh had to face triple challenge of the internal evil represented by the priestly classes, British imperialism and pro British rule of Indian states. Exactly one month before the war of Independence in 1857 Guru Ram Singh unfurled the white flag with a new meaning and prescribed a new pledge. Revived Sikhism with a new vigour and made a new beginning, adding socio - political angle to the Sikh religion to fight the imperialist power through non-violent means. Guru Ram Singh adopted Swadeshi in the truest sense and completely boycotted the British goods and its services totally. He launched the civil disobedience movement to such an extent that the Sikhs revolted everything that had even the remotest support of the Britishers.

The scare of the movement was so great in the minds of Britishers that their Government was shaken to its roots. The Swadeshi, non-violent and non - cooperation movement of Sikhs was later on adopted by Mahatma Gandhi as a means of exterminating the Britishers from India.

During the period of 1857 to 1867 in ten years, according to records dug out from National Archives by the eminent scholars,

Britishers recorded that the disciples of Guru Ram Singh rose to seven lakhs. It was the revival of Sikhism in true sense and it became greater danger for the stability of Britishers in India. They suppressed the movement terrorised Sikhs and exiled Guru Ram Singh in 1872 to Burma. Thereafter they played their game of divide and rule and broke Sikhs into bits and pieces. They interfered in the religious matters of Sikhs brutally and altered even the basic concepts of the Sikhism. They tempered with the original written works of Sikhs. The originals were destroyed. The contemporary records of the Sikh history are now no more available.

The revival of Sikhism and the movement started by Guru Ram Singh known, as Kuka Movement in the records of Britishers has yet not seen the light of the day. It has yet to be published properly so as to be known by every Sikh and be proud of it. Every Indian should know the sacrifices made by Sikhs and their families for the sake of independence of the country and how dear is India to Sikhs.

The word Kuka used by the Britishers in their records for the Sikhs revived by the Guru Ram Singh was definitely not used out of respect for Sikhs. Their effort had always been to demoralise Sikhs and not to glorify them or their deeds. The Ludhiana District Gazetteer - 1904 says 'The truth is that it is not possible for a Kuka to be a loyal subject of the British Government.' They could have very easily said that 'The truth is that it is not possible for a Sikh to be a loyal subject of the British Government. But it did not suit them to consolidate and unite the Sikhs. Their effort had always been to divide the Sikhs and keep them busy in smaller groups and provoke them to fight and quarrel with each other on menial matters.

Guru Ram Singh always worked for the revival of Sikh rule. The Britishers confessed and it can now be ascertained from the records that he wanted to establish Khalsa Raj in 1860's. Historians better know in those days there was no divide in Sikhs like Singh Sabhias, Chief Khalsa, Nihangs, Kukas, and Namdhari or for

that matter Akalis. It was the systematic creation of Britishers to break us in bits and pieces to weaken the otherwise very bold and energetic Sikhs baptised by Guru Gobind Singh and later revived by Guru Ram Singh.

Thousands of Sikhs revived by Guru Ram Singh whose unity, one-ness of purpose, love for their Guru and moral attitude was so strong that the Britishers felt shaken. The first clash occurred in June 1863, when Guru Ram Singh held big gathering of Sikhs at village Khote and performed simple and inexpensive mass marriages of six couples. The Britishers had already set its secret agents on Sikhs. One British agent reported, "Ram Singh wishes the Sikh rule back." Another spy wrote, "Guru Ram Singh showed his determination to fight and defeat the Britishers and to establish the Khalsa Raj." The Governor of Punjab in 1864 felt, "Guru Ram Singh was organizing the war like Sikhs for political purposes under the cloak of social and religious reforms."

R.G.Taylor the Commissioner of Ambala in 1866 reported, "Guru Ram Singh wanting to recover there much loved freedom and restore the glories of the Sikhs. It is my thorough belief that these lads (Sikhs) mean war sooner or later and I strongly recommend my Government to be before hand with them."

Mr. Donovan from Doraha warned in 1868 and wrote to Governor General that, "A most dreadful thing was going on in the country; and that Guru Ram Singh had gathered two lakh Sikhs to rebel us — and finally to expel us from the Punjab". He further warned, "An insurrection is expected to take place sometime in the early part of next year."

Mr. Donovan quoted Guru Ram Singh as having addressed the following words to an assembly of Sikhs, "Brethren - by the word of our God, and according to the doctrines of Guru Gobind Singh, we have met at this time to consult about the best mode of expelling all the Britishers from the country."

Mr. Donovan remonstrated in the concluding part of his report that, "The Kuka Sikhs are daily expected to rise and all native chiefs are sworn in to join them. The cry of rebellion has gone through out India; so let us not be lenient. Let us now hang, confiscate, reward, disarm, pull down or transport. The Malwa country in general stink with rebellion and whole place is now boiling for British blood."

Guru Ram Singh wanted Britishers to leave India and therefore expanded Kuka Movement to Kashmir, Nepal, Afghanistan, Bhutan and Russia. Contacts with their rulers were made through the important emissaries of Guru Ram Singh. Britishers suspected help to Sikhs from the maharajas of the countries and it was under these circumstances that the year 1872 proved to be fatal for the Kuka Movement and Guru Ram Singh was exiled to Burma.

The divide started by the Britishers in Sikhs have gone so deep that as on today we stand divided in dozens of sections of Sikhs, which in my opinion is deplorable. In the present context when democracy is the cry of the day, everything you wish to achieve depends on the head count. For head count unity is the prime consideration. Consolidation of total Sikh energy is the necessity of the day.

The research scholars and intellectuals need to go deeper on this subject and dig out the original material and do their work afresh instead of continue to work on the material made available to us by the Britishers. The concept of Guru Sahibs given to us, creation of Sikhism and Sikh history in toto needs to be reviewed thoroughly.

SatJug in its Annual Number this year is reproducing in its English section some of the original documents with a view to bring out the hidden facts and literature of the Sikh history of Guru Ram Singh period. We shall try to put the historical facts in the correct perspective on the basis of records, which was otherwise blemished by the Britishers. Our endeavour is to make the history interesting for the common reader.

This would give insight about the freedom movement pioneered by Guru Ram Singh and contributions made by Sikhs in the freedom struggle. This will also benefit the present day generation, would add to their knowledge and they would be able to know about the sacrifices and sufferings borne by our ancestors. Because of their fortitude and renunciation we are enjoying today the fruits of freedom.

We are producing the documents in original even about the death controversy of Satguru Ram Singh. The views of authors are given without editing them, which may not be according to the Namdhari faith and belief.

Reader\$ would please accept the humble beginning by SATJUG of publishing the source material.

-H.S. Hanspal